THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The exports of leather footwear from India has been increasing steadily over the last few years and have grown from a level of Rs. 280 crores in 1990-91 to more than Rs. 900 crores in 1994-95. Realising the vast untapped export potential, leather footwear has been identified for intensive focus by the Government to achieve large incremental growth in exports. As part of the export promotion strategy certain steps have been taken e.g., instituting various training programmes including programmes for trainer-training, establishing design studies with CAD/CAM facility; estabishment of dedicated industrial estates for footwear; reduction/rationalisation of Customs/Excise duty on footwear and footwear components; coordinated marketing etc.

Growth in leather exports

6762. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the projected growth in leather exports for 1995-96;

(b) whether any efforts are proposed to explore new markets for leather;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh is a major contributor of raw leather used for exports;

(d) whether any incentives are given to enterpreneurs to set up modern leather processing units for exports; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The expected growth in the exports of leather and leather products during 1995-96 is estimated to be about 16 per cent.

(b) Yes, Sir. Efforts are being made to explore new markets such as South Africa.

(c) Andhra Pradesh contributes around 11 per cent of the total availability of raw hides and skins in the country.

(d) and (e) No special incentives are being given for setting up leather processing units for exports at present apart from the general incentives available for the exporters.

Machinery imports by DGFT and DRI

6763. SHRI VAYALAR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to a report in the Asian Age dated the 29th April, 1995 that DGFT and DRI clash over machinery imports; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to check the fraud of certain firms of over invoicing and other malpractices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) M/s. Rama Newsprint & Papers Ltd., were issued an import licence on 2.4.1992 for import of second hand machinery for the manufacture of newsprint on the recommendation of the Secretariat for Industrial Approvals in the Ministry of Industry based on the clearance given by the Special Approvals Committee-NRI. The firm later made a request to allow them to import machinery/components which were more than 7 years old in relaxation of the condition laid down in the Policy prevailing at that time. The amendment was recommended by the concerned technical authority. The request of the firm was considered by the appropriate Inter-Ministerial Committee constituted under the EXIM Policy 1992-97. The Committee approved the import of the said machinery/components. As far